Clearance for high-rise buildings

516. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently issued guidelines making it mandatory for all high-rise structures throughout the country to take prior clearance from his Ministry;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons thereto;

(c) whether the view points of the various Governments were solicited before the issue of the guidelines and if not, the reasons therefor, and

(d) the mechanism to ensure that the clearance of the projects is not unduly delayed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Environmental Impact Assessment Notification, 1994 was amended on 7th July, 2004 making it mandatory for new projects relating to construction of new townships, industrial townships, settlement colonies, commercial complexes, hotel complexes, hospitals, industrial estates and office complexes for 1,000 persons or more or discharging sewage of 50 thousand litres "per day or more with an investment of Rs. 50 crores or more to obtain prior environmental clearance from the Central Government before starting any construction on the new project. The amendment was brought forth taking note of the increasing adverse impacts on wetlands and water bodies, besides the air pollution and serious health problems arising out of the environmental impacts of such projects.

(c) Yes, Sir

(d) The Ministry has constituted an Environmental Appraisal Committee of Experts to appraise new projects within the stipulated time-frame.

Developmental construction activities in tribal areas and villages

517. SHRI DATTAMEGHE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued a fresh set of guidelines allowing a variety of developmental construction activities in tribal areas and villages on the fringe of forests;

(b) if so, the details thereof;